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What's the Big Idea, Molly?



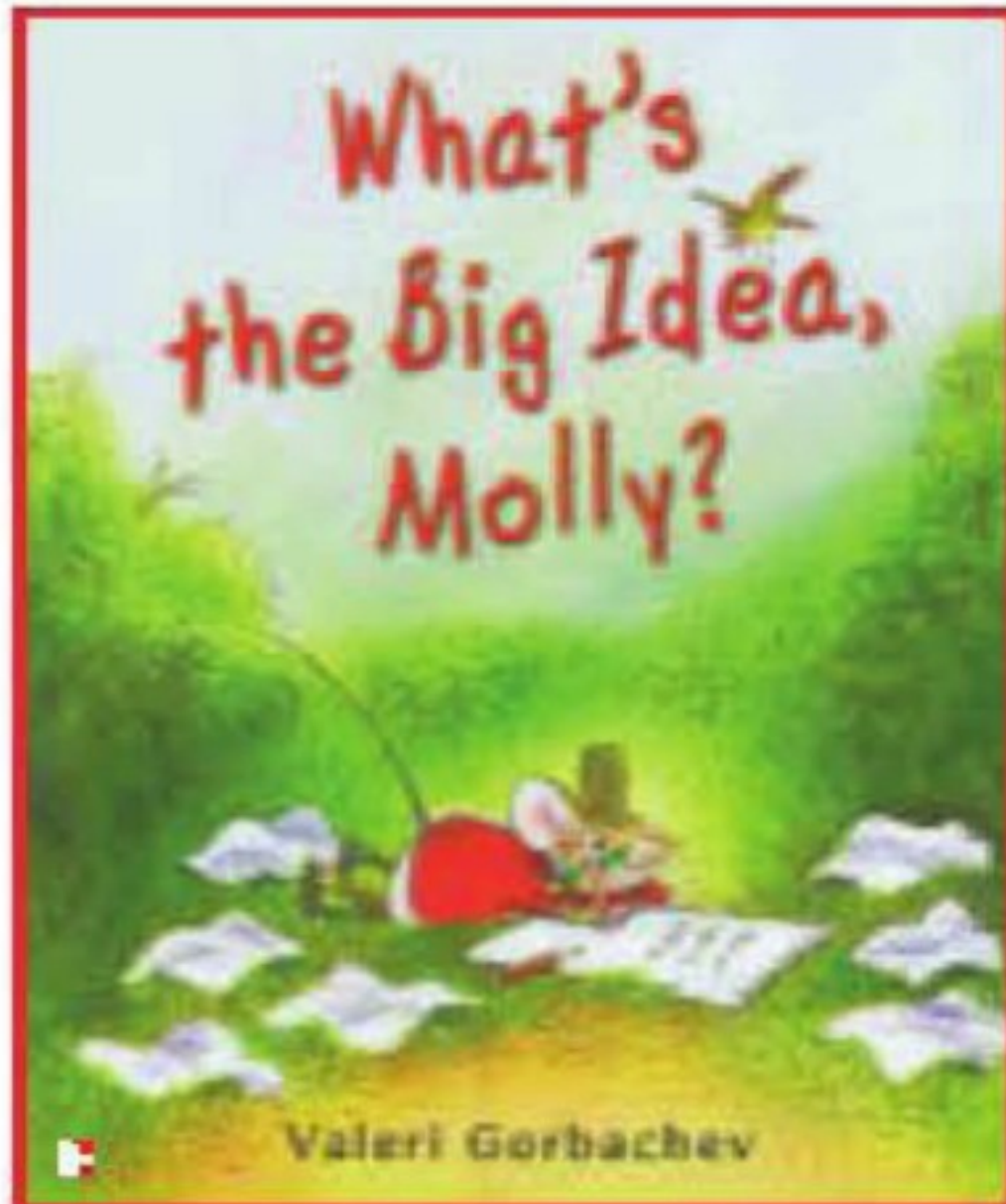
Valeri Gorbachev

Modeling Concepts of Print

- Track the print from left to right as you read each page. Remind children that when you reach the end of a sentence we move our finger down and to the left and start reading the next line. Have a few children model the return sweep.
- On page I5, point to the first and last word in the sentence. Explain to children that sometimes the last word of a sentence will be on the next line down. Demonstrate by using the return sweep.
- Have children count how many sentences are on page I8.



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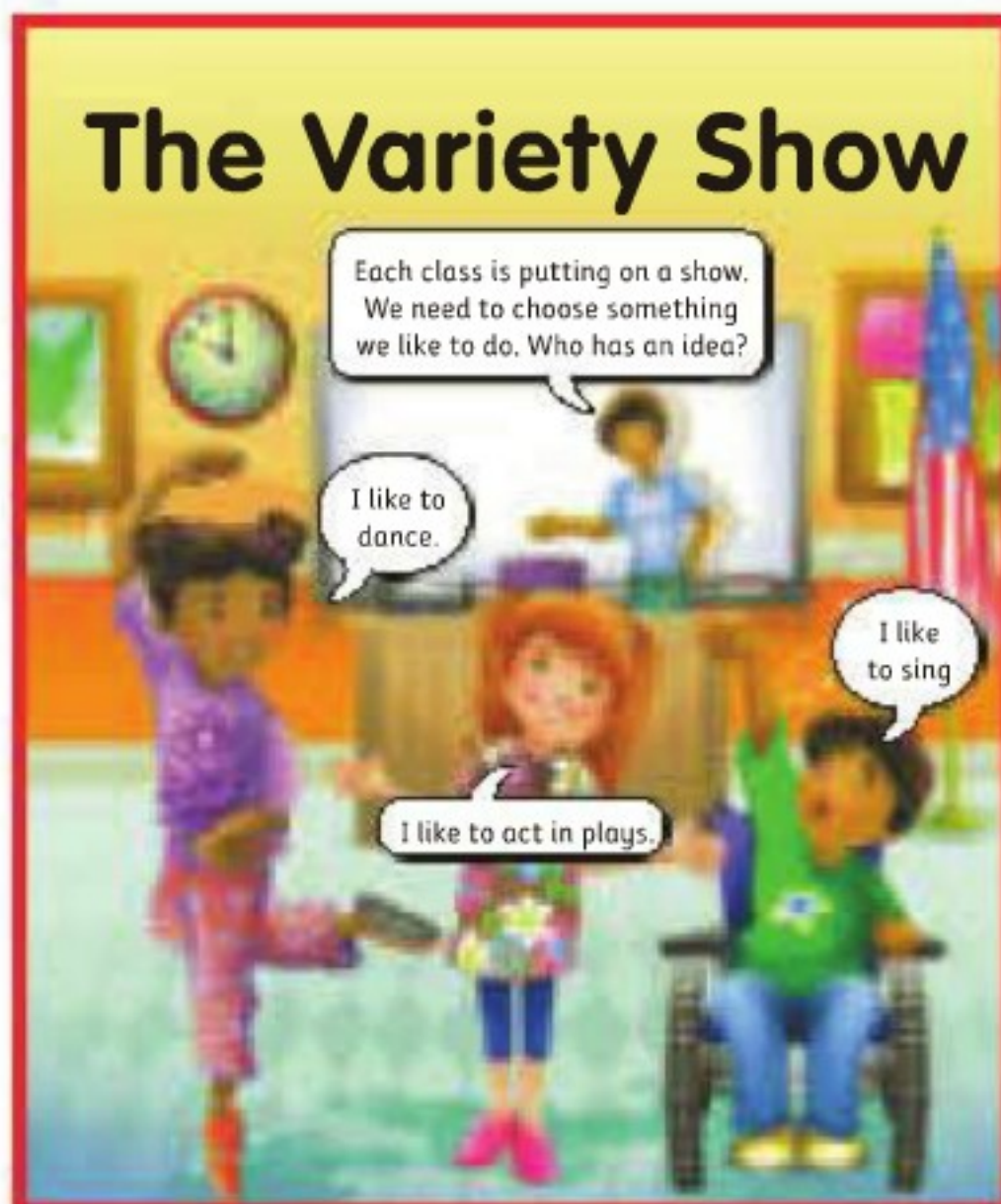


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by Valeri Gorbachev

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For Patti Gauch



What's the Big Idea, Molly?



Valeri Gorbachev





Molly put down her notebook. It was not a good day for ideas. Molly had been trying to write a poem all morning—she loved beautiful words, but she just couldn't find an idea.



Now all her friends had come to Molly's house. Tomorrow was Turtle's birthday, but no one could come up with an idea for a gift for Turtle, either.

Molly put her pencil down.







"I know," Rabbit said. "A nice picture is a great birthday gift. I will draw a picture of a flower for Turtle."

"I like it," said Goose.
"I will draw a picture of a flower for Turtle, too."



Frog jumped right off the couch.
"Me, too. I love to draw flowers."





"And me," said Pig.
"Flowers are my favorite
things to draw."

"No, no, no," said Molly.
"Drawing is a good idea,
and I like to draw, too. But
we can't give Turtle five
pictures of a flower. We
need to think."





"I think of my best ideas when I run," said Rabbit,
walking out of the house.

"I think best when I am fishing!" Goose said,
following him.

"I get my best ideas down by the pond," Frog said.

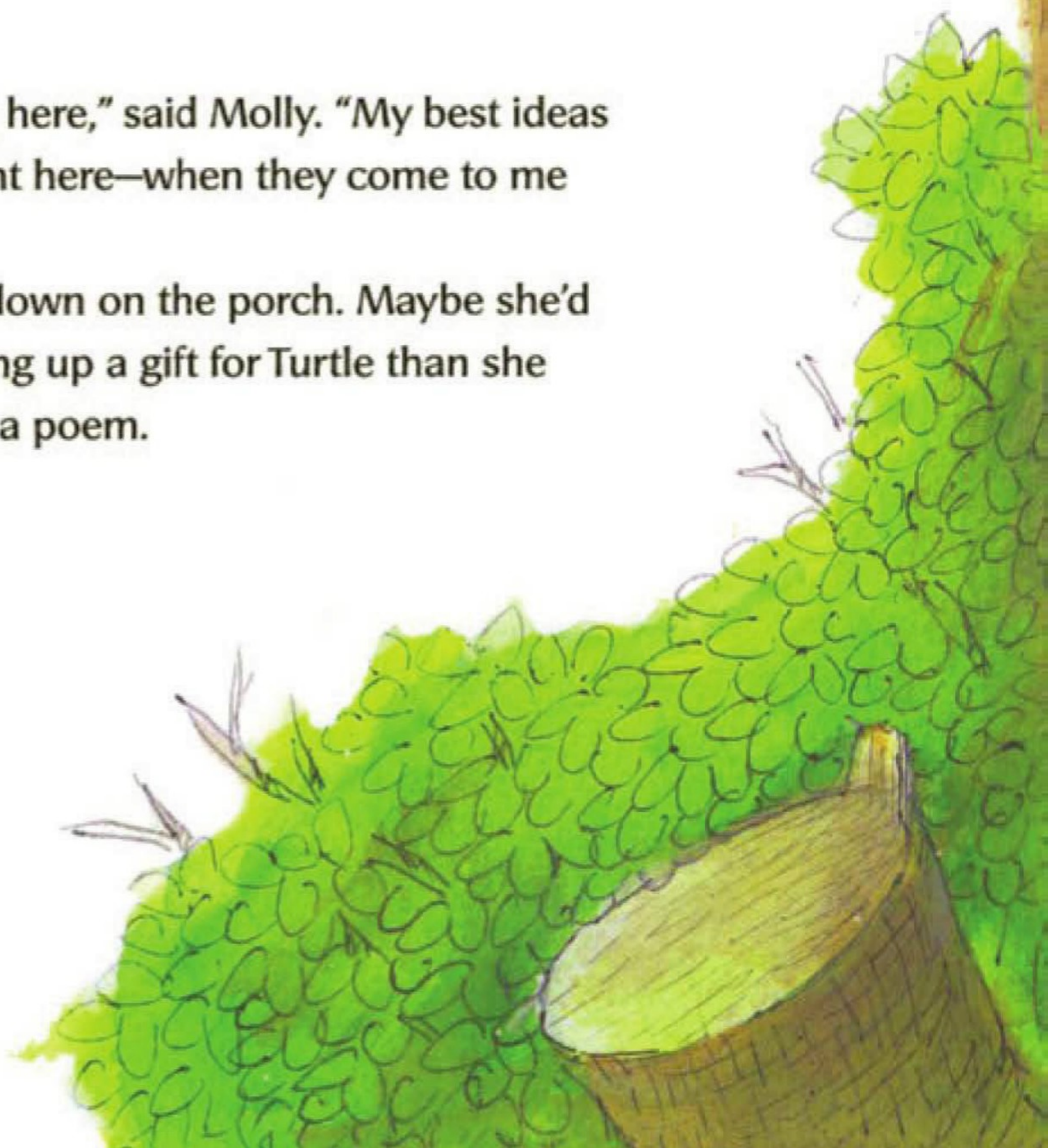
"Mine come to me under the willow tree," said Pig.
"I'll be back soon."

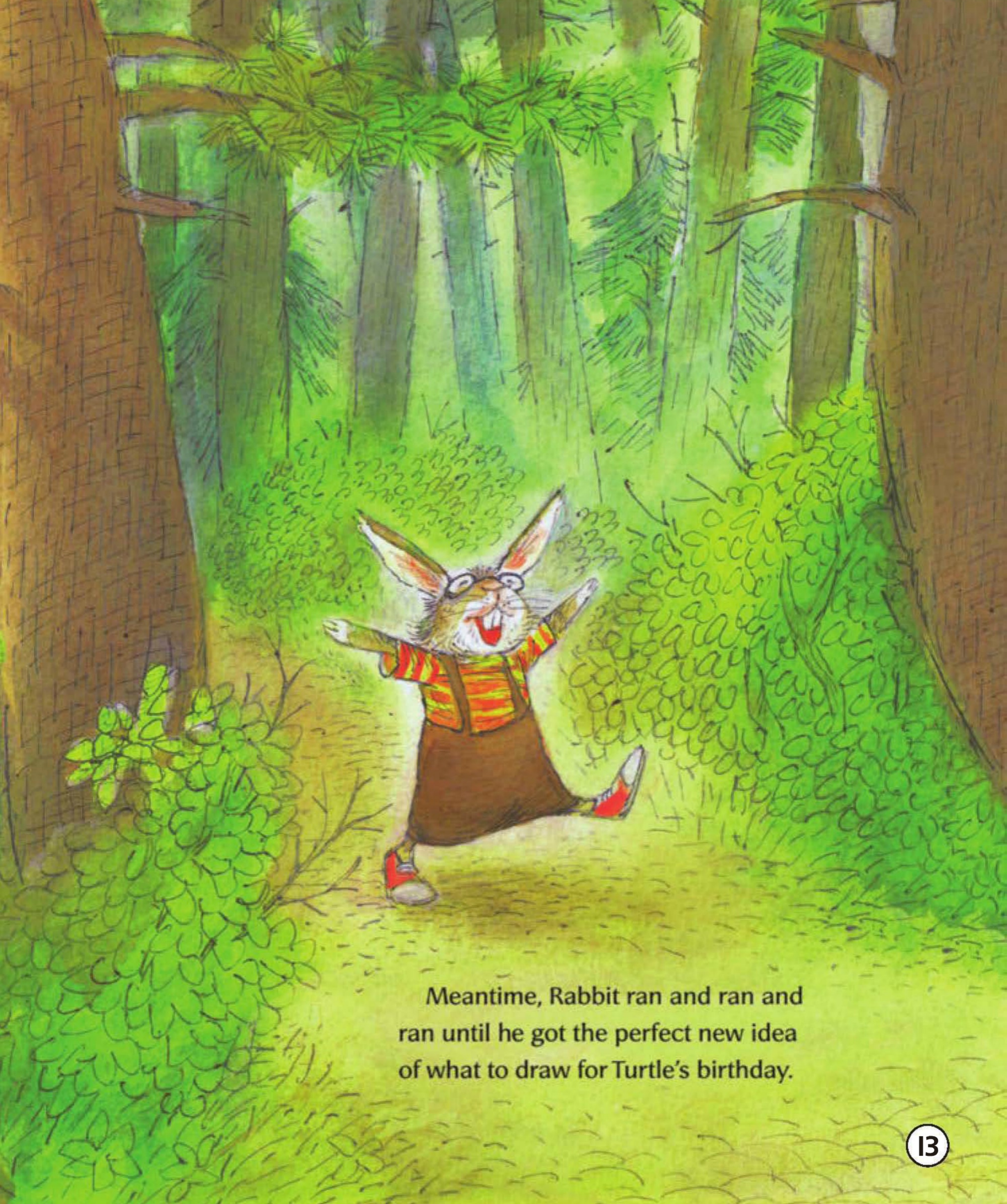




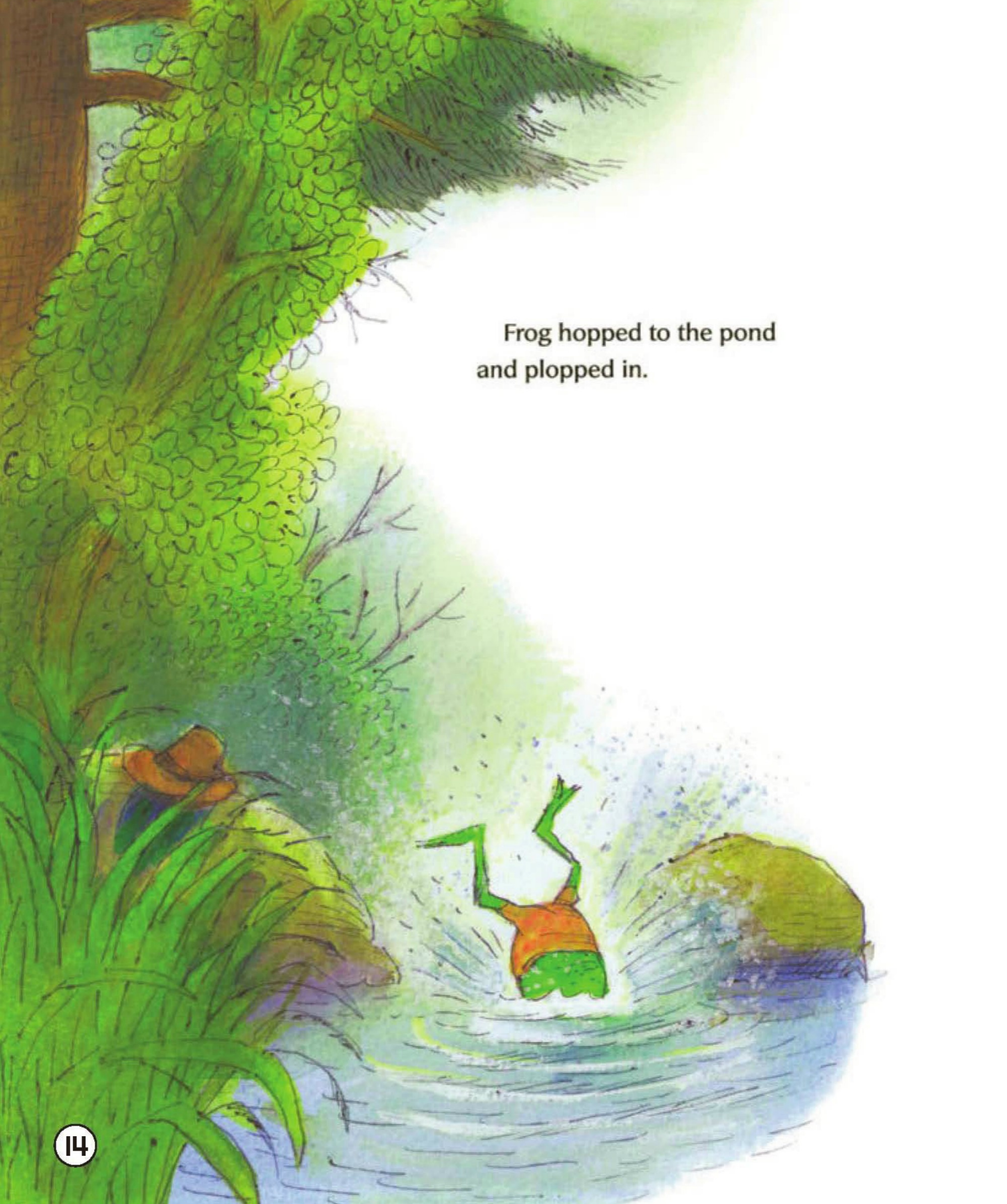
"I am staying here," said Molly. "My best ideas come to me right here—when they come to me at all, that is."

And she sat down on the porch. Maybe she'd do better thinking up a gift for Turtle than she did thinking up a poem.





Meantime, Rabbit ran and ran and
ran until he got the perfect new idea
of what to draw for Turtle's birthday.

A colorful illustration of a frog jumping into a pond. The frog is green with an orange belly and is captured mid-air, with its legs extended. It is creating a splash in the blue water. To the left, there are green lily pads and a large green tree with a brown trunk. The background is a bright, hazy white. The text "Frog hopped to the pond and plopped in." is written in a simple black font in the upper right area.

Frog hopped to the pond
and plopped in.



He swam and swam until he got a great idea of what to draw for Turtle's birthday.





Goose waddled down to the lake.



He fished and fished until he got just the right idea of what to draw for Turtle's birthday.





Pig went right to the willow tree. And she took a nap!
That's how she got her best ideas.



When she woke up, she knew just what to draw.





When all the friends ran to Molly's house with their new ideas, Molly still had no idea at all!

"What ideas did you come up with?" she asked, a bit grumpy.





"Running through the woods, I saw a beautiful tree. I am drawing the tree for Turtle," said Rabbit.

"I am sure Turtle will love it."

"Oh, dear," said Frog. "Jumping into the pond, I saw a beautiful tree, too. Two pictures of trees will be all right, won't they?"



"You will not believe it," said Goose, "but I caught a fish under a most beautiful tree as well, and I have drawn that very tree for Turtle. Three very good pictures of trees will be all right, too. . . . Right?"



"Oops," squealed Pig. "The tree that I was sleeping under was the perfect tree. I have started to draw that very tree for Turtle."



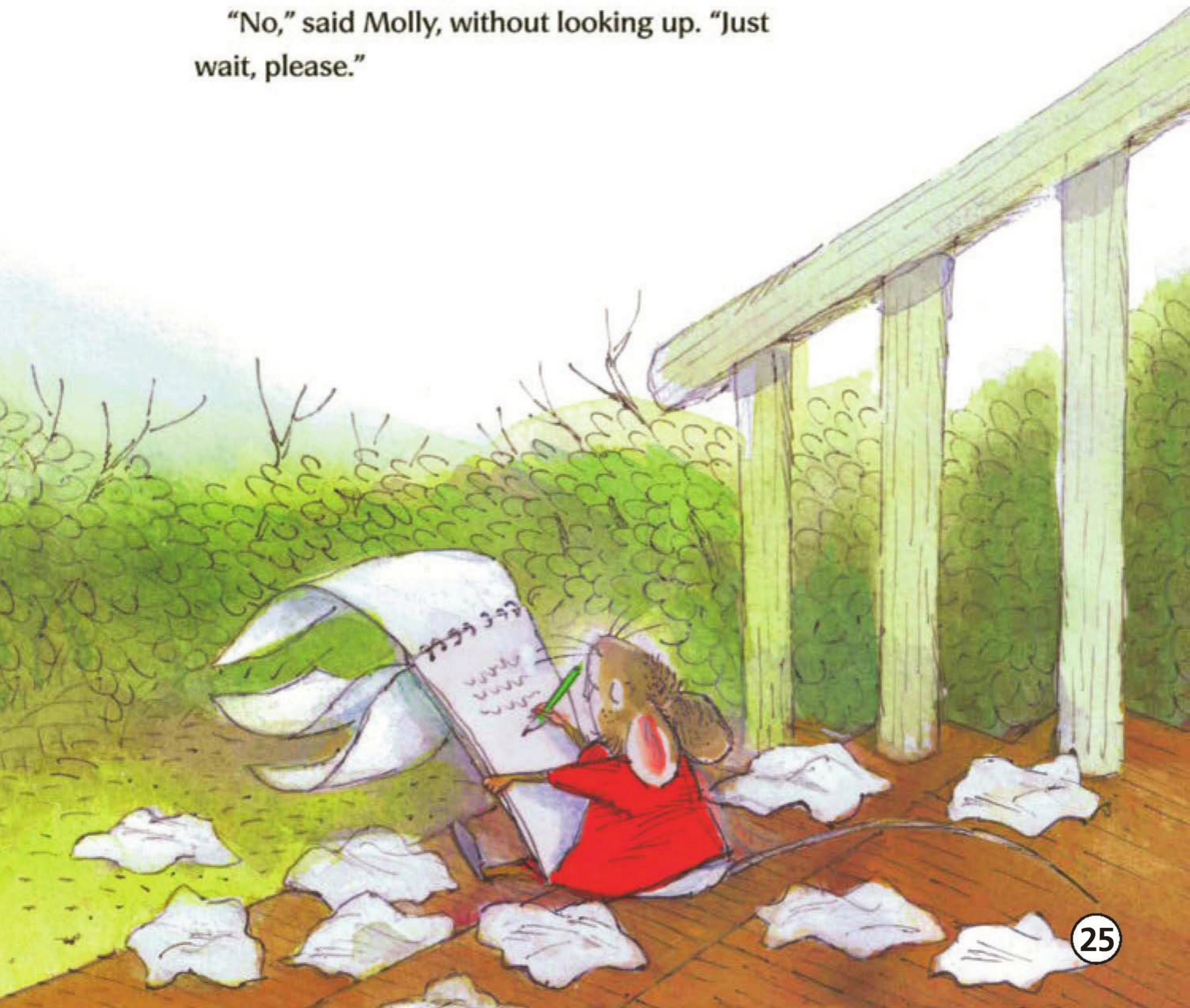


"Oh, goodness," said Molly. "First it was all flowers, now it is all trees! You can't all give Turtle a picture of a tree . . . hmmm. Wait, I've got an idea!"

She sat down on the porch with her pad and pencil and began to write.

"What is it, Molly?" said her friends. "Do you want to draw a tree, too?"

"No," said Molly, without looking up. "Just wait, please."



Then Molly told everyone her idea and they all loved it.









Molly and her friends got busy working on Turtle's present together.

They drew and painted and glued and stapled until it was finished.

Happy Birthday to You... 

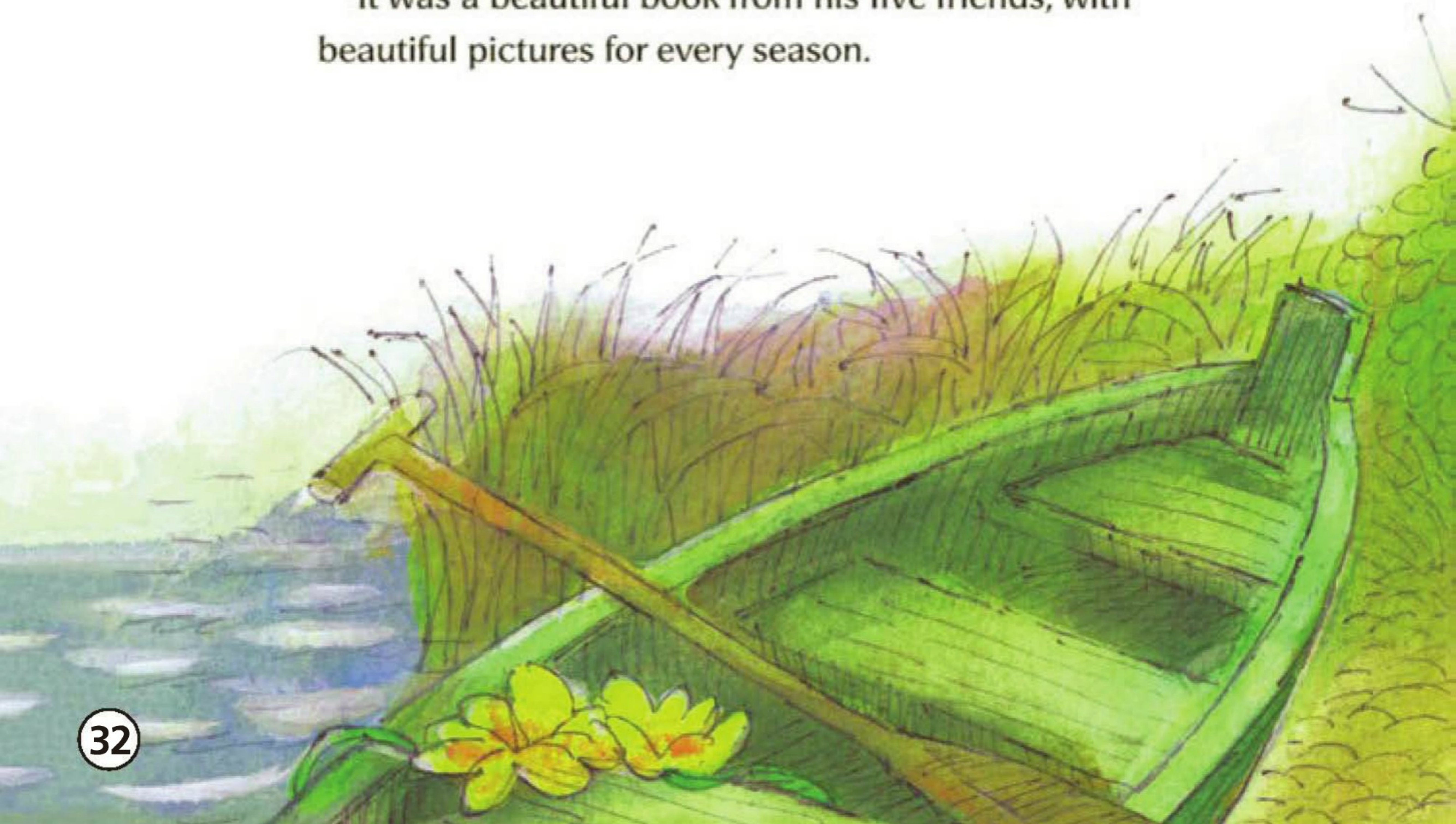


The next day was Turtle's birthday. They met him down by the pond and sang "Happy Birthday" to him, then all together gave him one—just one—wrapped present.





It was a beautiful book from his five friends, with beautiful pictures for every season.





The summer picture was drawn by Rabbit.



Goose drew the autumn picture.



Frog drew the winter picture.



Pig, who loved spring best, drew spring.



And Molly wrote every beautiful word.



"I love this book," said Turtle. "And I love all of you. I will think of you whenever I read it."

And they all sat down and had a great birthday party together.









When Molly went home, she sat back on the porch step.
“I wonder,” she said, picking up her notebook and pencil,
“if I will get another big idea tomorrow.”

"I am ready for it."



The Variety Show

Each class is putting on a show.
We need to choose something
we like to do. Who has an idea?

I like to
dance.

I like to act in plays.

I like
to sing.

These are all good ideas.
But we can do only one show.
How will we decide?

Let's take
a vote!

We can raise our
hands to vote "yes."





Let's put on a variety show with dancing, singing, and acting.

Can we see a show of hands for the variety show?

Look at all the hands! The variety show wins!

Great! We can all work together.

Respond to Reading

Show the Big Book and prompt children to retell the story in their own words.

Ask children:

- What problem did Molly have in the beginning of the story?
 - What ways did the animals try to get their best ideas?
 - How did Molly solve the problem of what to give Turtle?
 - What were some of the pages like?
-

About the Author/Illustrator: Valeri Gorbachev

Valeri Gorbachev has always believed that it is important to follow your dreams and to do what you enjoy doing. It's no wonder that he is both an author and an illustrator. His favorite subjects in school were reading and drawing.



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